

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Carson City District Office

**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

Project Lead: Erik Pignata
Field Office: Sierra Front
Lead Office: Sierra Front

Case File/Project Number: NVN 090986

Applicable Categorical Exclusion (cite section): 516 DM 11.9 Appendix 4 – 154, Other, J. #3: “Conducting preliminary hazardous materials assessments and site investigations, site characterization studies and environmental monitoring. Included are siting, construction, installation and/or operation of small monitoring devices such as wells, particulate dust counters and automatic air or water samples.”

NEPA Number: DOI-BLM-NV-C020-2012-0050-CX

Project Name: CEC Talapoosa Wind Testing Type 2

Project Description: The applicant has applied for a wind testing and monitoring project area very similar to the Great Basin Wind Testing Type 2 that recently expired. All met towers were removed from the project area. Two met towers in the same places as the old project are proposed on the following public lands:

T. 19 N., R. 24 E., MDM:

Met Tower #1: sec. 20, S½SW¼

Met Tower #2: sec. 28, on an existing communication facility at the Talapoosa comm site

The free standing tower in section 20 would be 50 meters high and approximately 6 inches in diameter. It would be erected on removable steel plates and use anchors with guy wires to remain in place. No concrete foundation is necessary. Installation takes place using standard pick-up trucks. Attached to the mast are anemometers to measure wind speed. Power is gathered by solar panels also affixed to the mast. The anemometer in sec. 28 would be attached to an existing communication facility tower. Existing roads and trails will be utilized for installation of the met tower.

This would be a standard FLPMA Wind Testing and Monitoring Project right-of-way, Type 2, for three years. Construction would begin within a few days after an authorization is granted.

Installation at the communication facility and erection of the free-standing tower would take no more than one day to complete. Periodic maintenance visits will be necessary throughout the life of the project, with no more than monthly visits anticipated.

The project area is not located within preliminary general or priority habitat for the greater sage-grouse.

Applicant Name: Clean Energy Center, LLC (CEC)

Project Location (include Township/Range, County):

See Exhibit A, attached

Lyon County

BLM Acres for the Project Area: 7,206.26

Land Use Plan Conformance (cite reference/page number): LND-7, #6: "Exchanges and minor non-Bureau initiated realty proposals will be considered where analysis indicates they are beneficial to the public."

Name of Plan: Carson City Field Office Consolidated Resource Management Plan (2001)

Special Stipulation:

- a. The holder shall contact the BLM and obtain approval from the authorized officer before beginning any activity that is a substantial deviation from this grant or that will cause new surface disturbance.

Screening of Extraordinary Circumstances: The following extraordinary circumstances apply to individual actions within categorical exclusions (43 CFR 46.215). The BLM has considered the following criteria:

(Specialist
review:
initial in
appropriate box)

<i>If any question is answered 'yes' an EA or EIS must be prepared.</i>		YES	NO
1. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on public health or safety? (project lead/P&EC)			ESP
2. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (EO 11990); floodplains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds (EO 13186); and other ecologically significant or critical areas? (wildlife biologist, hydrologist, outdoor recreation planner, archeologist)			nc ADC RCC B2P
3. Would the Proposed Action have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA 102(2)(E)]? (project lead/P&EC)			ESP
4. Would the Proposed Action have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks? (project lead/P&EC)			ESP
5. Would the Proposed Action establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects? (project lead/P&EC)			ESP
6. Would the Proposed Action have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects? (project lead/P&EC)			ESP
7. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the NRHP as determined by the bureau or office? (archeologist)			RGC
8. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the list of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species? (wildlife biologist, botanist)			DT DAB
9. Would the Proposed Action violate federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment? (project lead/P&EC)			ESP
10. Would the Proposed Action have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (EA 12898)? (project lead/P&EC)			ESP
11. Would the Proposed Action limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007)? (archeologist)			RGC
12. Would the Proposed Action contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and EO 13112)? (botanist)			DT

SPECIALISTS' REVIEW: During ID Team consideration of the above Proposed Action and extraordinary circumstances, the following specialists reviewed this CX:

Erik Pignata, Realty Specialist *EP*

Arthur Callan, Outdoor Recreation Planner

Niki Cutler, Hydrologist

Rachel Crews, Archaeologist

Pilar Ziegler, Wildlife Biologist/BLM Sensitive Species - Wildlife

Dean Tonenna, Botanist - Natural Resource Specialist/BLM Sensitive Species - Plants

Brian Buttazoni, Planning & Environmental Coordinator

CONCLUSION: Based upon the review of this Proposed Action, I have determined that the above-described project is a categorical exclusion, in conformance with the LUP, and does not require an EA or EIS. A categorical exclusion is not subject to protest or appeal.

Approved by:



Leon Thomas
Field Manager
Sierra Front Field Office

8.20-12

(date)